

August 9, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Advisory Issued for Magic and Salmon Falls Reservoirs Because of Confirmed Harmful Algal Blooms

South Central Idaho - The South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are issuing public health advisories today for Magic Reservoir and Salmon Falls Reservoir. Recent DEQ water samples show the toxin Microcystin is now at unhealthy levels in these reservoirs because of recent cyanobacteria harmful algal blooms (HABs). These are the first reservoirs in the region with a confirmed harmful algal bloom in 2021.

The public is advised to take the following steps to protect their health:

- Avoid exposure to water in reservoirs under a HAB health advisory. Make sure children, pets, and livestock are not exposed to the water.
- Do not drink water with a HAB advisory. Boiling and disinfecting DO NOT remove toxins from water.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae.
- If fishing in HAB water, remove all fat, skin, and organs before cooking. Toxins are more likely to collect in those tissues. Wash hands after handling.

“It’s important to keep family and pets away from the water when there is a harmful algal bloom because the toxin released can cause neurological problems, gastrointestinal distress, and irritate other areas of your body like your skin, eyes, and ears,” said SCPHD Public Health Program Manager Josh Jensen.

If your pet begins to show signs of toxic exposure after playing in a reservoir or lake, contact your vet immediately for treatment.

HABs are not unusual in warm summer months and typically shrink quickly as the water temperature drops in mid to late fall. You can help by reporting suspicious looking water to DEQ by phone, email, with the bloomWatch app, or online at <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/about-us/contact-us/report-an-environmental-concern/>.

Common indicators of an algal bloom:

- The water has foam, scum, algal mats, or paint-like streaks on the surface
- The water looks discolored
- The water smells unusually bad

More information is available at <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/recreation-health-advisories/cyanobacteria-harmful-algal-blooms/>

Learn more about identifying a harmful algal boom here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBhcrryEA4c>

For updates, please visit www.deq.idaho.gov or www.phd5.idaho.gov .